

Pharmacies - Data Brief

Vermont Immunization Registry

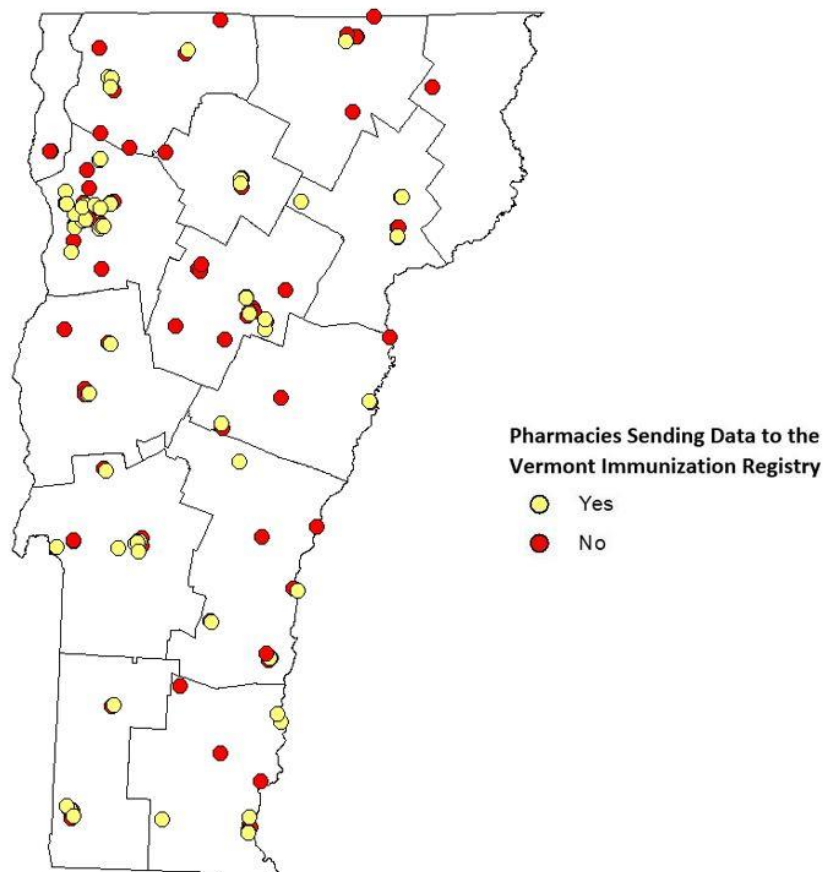
Background

The role of pharmacies in the health care system has evolved over time. No longer simply a marketplace for medications, they offer other health services, including vaccinations, which makes them a key player in increasing access to vaccines for adults in Vermont. Laws vary from state to state as to the patient age at which pharmacies may administer vaccines. In Vermont, a pharmacist may administer vaccine to patients 18 years and older¹.

Pharmacies and the Vermont Immunization Registry

Vermont law requires that all vaccines administered be entered into the Vermont Immunization Registry (IMR). In 2014, the IMR began receiving data from pharmacies across the state. As of August 2016, 58 pharmacies in Vermont (34%) were sending immunization data to the IMR. The IMR staff can offer pharmacies a number of solutions to meet their reporting requirement.

The map below shows the locations of all pharmacies in Vermont, noting those that are sending data to the IMR. Not all pharmacies currently administer vaccine.



Vaccines Provided by Pharmacies

As noted above, Vermont pharmacies may only provide vaccines to adults 18 years or older. The vaccine recommendations for adults vary depending on a person's age, risk factors, and medical history. All adults should receive an annual flu vaccine, a Tdap vaccine once and a Td booster every ten years. Women should get the Tdap vaccine during each pregnancy.² The zoster vaccine is recommended once for adults age 60 and older. The pneumococcal vaccine series consists of two different vaccines administered one year apart, and is recommended for adults age 65 and older.³ Adults with certain medical conditions, including lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, or a weakened immune system, may have additional vaccines recommended.

Flu vaccines account for most of the immunizations administered at pharmacies and reported to the IMR. A complete breakdown of the type of vaccine administered by pharmacies to particular age groups is show below.

All Vaccines Administered by Pharmacies Through August, 2016

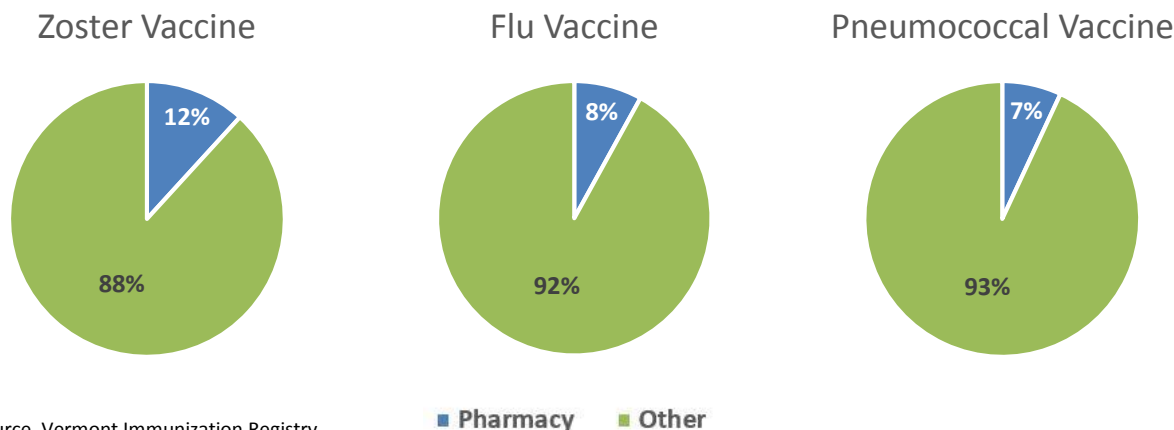
Ages 18-49	Count	Percent	Ages 50-64	Count	Percent	Ages 65+	Count	Percent
Influenza	5728	96.5%	Influenza	5572	88.2%	Influenza	6753	75.6%
Pneumococcal	35	0.6%	Pneumococcal	139	2.2%	Pneumococcal	1134	12.7%
TdaP	50	0.8%	TdaP	28	0.4%	TdaP	27	0.3%
Zoster (Shingles)	1	0.0%	Zoster (Shingles)	508	8.0%	Zoster (Shingles)	984	11.0%
Other	120	2.0%	Other	72	1.1%	Other	35	0.4%
Total	5934	100%	Total	6319	100%	Total	8933	100%

*data source, Vermont Immunization Registry

Some of the vaccines available in the Other category include Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, HPV, MMR, meningococcal, polio, and varicella. Check with your local pharmacy for information on which vaccinations may be offered.

The Impact of Pharmacies

Between July 2015 and June 2016, 14,305 immunizations administered by pharmacies were added to the IMR. While this is a small percentage of all adult immunizations, the data indicate that certain vaccines are more likely to be sought at pharmacies. The chart below displays the percentage of adult immunizations added to the IMR in this time period that came from pharmacies.



*data source, Vermont Immunization Registry

All pharmacies in Vermont that send data to the IMR currently send monthly batch files for import. With batch processing it may take 30 days for the vaccine to be entered into the IMR.

Going Forward

Pharmacies, like other healthcare providers, are required to submit immunization data to the IMR on a regular basis. The IMR is a consolidated source for immunization information. Whether a person received an immunization at a pharmacy, a hospital, or a provider office, the IMR holds that information. A comprehensive immunization record will also reduce the possibility of adults receiving duplicate vaccines. The IMR will continue to seek immunization records from pharmacy groups to maintain complete histories. The IMR also offers access to immunizers at pharmacies to assist them in following schedule guidance and to check patient histories for previous immunizations. Increasing adult vaccination rates is a public health goal⁴, and pharmacies can be an important partner in that endeavor.

For more information, please contact Bridget Ahrens, Immunization Registry Manager, (802) 951-4094.

¹ Administrative Rules of the Board of Pharmacy, <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/702345/5-RX-Rules-2015-Final-Adopted-August-24-2015.pdf>

² Vaccine Information for Adults, <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html>

³ Pneumococcal Vaccination, <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/default.htm>

⁴ Immunization and Infectious Disease Performance Dashboard, http://healthvermont.gov/hv2020/dashboard/imm_infectious.aspx